METROPOLITAN COUNCIL ON HOUSING
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Tenant
Inquilino

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339 Lafayette St.
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PERIODICAL

Once Again, RGB Proposes Range of Increases

By Kenny Schaeffer

On May 5, the city Rent Guidelines Board proposed that rent-stabilized tenants should face increases of between 2 and 4.5 percent for a one-year lease renewal, and between 4 and 7.5 percent for two-year leases. The RGB also recommended minimum monthly increases for tenants who have lived in their apartments for six years or more: $20 to $45 for a one-year lease or $40 to $75 for two years.

Following further deliberations and public hearings on June 15 and June 17, the RGB will vote June 23 to set guidelines for increases that take effect between October 1, 2009 and September 30, 2010.

The board is required by law to pass a proposed guideline, which the public can comment on for at least 30 days before the final vote. But for the last several years, under the current chair Marvin Markus, it has masked its intention by proposing a range of possible increases.

"This isn't a proposed increased we can comment on but a cloud of probability," objected one tenant at the vote, in the Great Hall at Cooper Union, "and the probability is that they are planning another round of unaffordable increases despite a worsening affordability crisis amid record landlord profits."

Before the preliminary vote, the two tenant representatives, Adriene Holder and Ronald Languedoc, refused to make a proposal. They objected to the process the board followed last year and has followed so far this year, where except for Markus, the public members do not reveal their thinking in discussions with the other members. They also criticized the lack of deliberation on the minimum increases imposed last year, which were proposed in an e-mail sent to board members on the day of the final vote.

The nine-member board consists of two owner representatives, two tenant representatives, and five "public members." The public members, chosen by Mayor Michael Bloomberg, all come from business and financial backgrounds. Judging from their actions on May 5, they still have no appreciation of the hardships faced by New York City tenants during the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

Last year, the Board voted for the highest increases in decades: 4.5 percent for one year and 8.5 percent for two years, with a $45 or $85 minimum for tenants paying less than $1,000 a month who have been in their apartments for at least six years. Tenants called this a new variant of the discredited "poor tax" of the Koch and Giuliani administrations, and are challenging it in a pending lawsuit brought by The Legal Aid Society and Legal Services.

A study by state Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli in April showed that New York City lost 178,542 apartments renting for less than $1,000 between 2002 and 2008. Based on the federal hardship level of 30 percent of income going to rent, these are the only apartments affordable to households with annual incomes below $40,000, which includes more than half of the one million city households living in stabilized apartments.

Hours before the May 5 vote, City Councilmember John Liu (D-Queens), who is the Working Families Party-endorsed candidate

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TIFFANY PAUL

Queens tenants protest outside a predatory equity building April 18, demanding the repeal of vacancy decontrol, .

Tenants Intensify Efforts as State Senate Stalls Rent Reforms

By Mario Mazzoni

With six weeks left in the legislative session in Albany, tenants are ramping up the fight to reform our rent laws. The Assembly passed a package of ten pro-tenant bills in February, but the state Senate has not yet voted on any of them.

Democrats had promised to deliver long-overdue reforms to the rent laws when they gained control over the Senate this year, but the housing agenda has been sidelined while wrangling over the budget and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority bailout dominated Albany politics. An aggressive push is on to get this package passed before the legislative session ends on June 22.

On May 12, hundreds of tenants descended on Albany with a message that our issues cannot wait any longer. A platform encompassing the priorities of the housing movement as it pertains to renters was presented, with sponsoring Senators joining the rally. In April, tenants held rallies in packed churches in Brooklyn and Manhattan, while Queens tenants protested in front of a building owned by a "predatory equity" firm.

The main focus of this campaign so far has been repealing vacancy decontrol, to prevent the loss of hundreds of thousands of rent-regulated apartments. For the past month, groups from across New York City have been sending caravans to Albany nearly every day the Legislature is in session to lobby senators on this issue. Other bills in the package would increase protections for tenants in Mitchell-Lama and project-based Section 8 buildings at risk of buyouts, restore of home rule to New York City over rent laws, close the owner-use evictions and preferential-rent loopholes in the state's rent laws, and reform the major capital improvements system.

A few key senators, including some from New York City, have yet to sign on as sponsors of the bill to repeal vacancy decontrol, and are cold on other issues of vital importance to tenants, even though many represent districts with vulnerable tenants and many units of affordable housing at risk of being deregulated. These senators are the targets of

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J-51 Litigation Has Landlords Running Scared

By Rachel Rachlin

Landlord and tenant advocates will have to wait until next year for the outcome of a crucial court case that could affect 350,000 tenants in New York City.

On April 7, the state Appellate Division granted the Tishman-Speyer real-estate company permission to appeal the unanimous March 5 decision that found that rent-regulated apartments cannot be decontrolled in buildings currently receiving J-51 tax abatements. Tenants in the Stuyvesant Town/Peter Cooper Village complex had challenged Tishman-Speyer's deregulation of apartments there on those grounds.

The case now moves up to the state Court of Appeals, where arguments in *Roberts v. Tishman Speyer Properties* will be heard in September. Tishman-Speyer's first brief will be submitted June 8, with the tenants' response due July 24 and the owners' final reply on August 11. A final ruling might not come until next year.

If the Appellate Division's ruling is upheld, the repercussions for landlords and tenants will be significant. According to the lawyers representing the tenants in Stuy Town/PCV, an estimated 4,400 tenants in formerly rent-stabilized units in the complex will be owed $200 million in rent overcharges. The decision also calls for all the apartments there that were decontrolled to be returned to rent-stabilized status.

"This has tremendous ramifications," Joseph Strasburg, president of the landlord lobbying group the Rent Stabilization Association, told *Crain's Business News*. "It is so huge in its impact, not just for Tishman-Speyer, but for a whole host of other investors and builders in this city."

Because vacancy decontrol and high-income decontrol offer landlords limitless profit potential, real-estate developers and private equity firms have been buying up rent-regulated buildings and converting stabilized units to market rate at an alarming speed. From 2004 to 2008, developers backed by private equity firms acquired almost 75,000 rent-regulated apartments, or about 6 percent of the city's 1.2 million regulated units.

The business model of "predatory equity" involves pushing out a large percentage of rent-regulated tenants very quickly. Many such buildings are purchased at speculative prices and cannot be profitable until a significant number of apartments are converted to market rate. There has been a dramatic rise in predatory-equity purchases in recent years. Rent-regulated tenants in properties owned by private equity–backed developers like Vantage Properties, Apollo Real Estate Advisors, Pinnacle Group, and Normandy Real Estate Partners have suffered greatly, facing increasing landlord harassment, disruption of services, and false eviction proceedings.

Tishman-Speyer bought the Stuy Town/PCV property from Metropolitan Life in 2006 for $5.4 billion, well above the profit margins the complex's mostly rent-regulated units produce. However, the company hasn't been able to get tenants out and deregulate units fast enough, and its reserves are dwindling rapidly. In response to the Appellate Division ruling, the state Division of Housing and Community Renewal temporarily halted vacancy and luxury decontrol in Stuy Town, pending the case's outcome.

The repeal of vacancy decontrol and the return of home rule to New York City is the only permanent solution to stopping the advance of predatory-equity practices in rent-regulated housing. However, if the Court of Appeals upholds the Appellate Division's decision, it could affect more than 350,000 residential units that were or are currently receiving the J-51 abatement. Both current and former tenants in deregulated apartments in buildings receiving a J-51 tax abatement would be able to file for rent overcharges with the DHCR. Potential tenant action lawsuits are already brewing.

Landlords are terrified that this ruling will open the floodgates to similar lawsuits and administrative overcharge proceedings brought by tenants in thousands of decontrolled units throughout the city. After the decision came down, the Real Estate Board of New York retained Stephen Meister of the boutique commercial law firm Meister Seelig & Fein to file an amicus brief seeking permission to appeal. The RSA has also offered legal assistance to Tishman-Speyer.

The J-51 program was originally designed by the city of New York to offer property owners tax breaks to upgrade their residential properties, provided that the units are rent-regulated. Tishman-Speyer and the previous owner, Metropolitan Life, have been receiving J-51 benefits for Stuyvesant Town and Peter Cooper Village since 1992. The complex is slated to receive the benefits until 2017.

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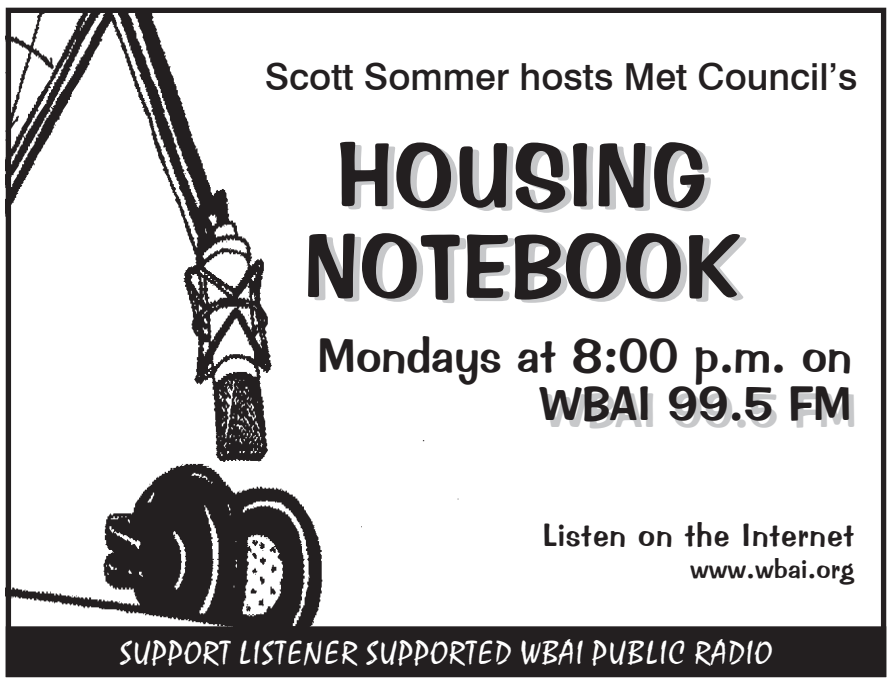

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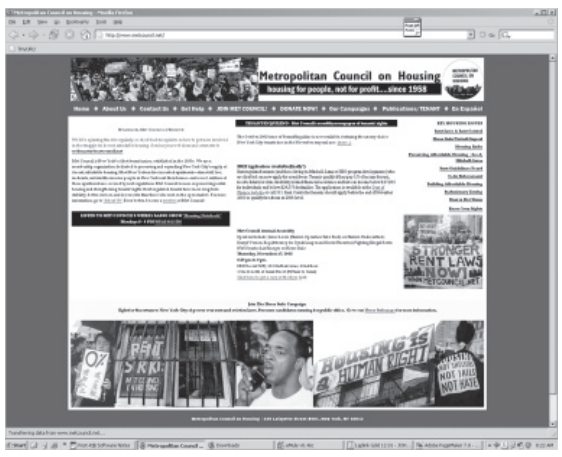

Get active in the tenant movement! Write to us at active@metcouncil.net

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EL INQUILINO HISPANO

Una vez más, la RGB propone una gama de aumentos

Por Kenny Schaeffer
Traducido por Lightning Translations

El 5 de mayo la Junta de Renta Regulada (Rent Guidelines Board, RGB) municipal propuso que los inquilinos en apartamentos con el alquiler estabilizado deben enfrentar aumentos de entre 2 y 4.5 por ciento por una renovación de contrato de un año y entre 4 y 7.5 por ciento por contratos de dos años. La RGB también recomendó aumentos mensuales mínimos para inquilinos que hayan vivido en sus apartamentos por seis años o más: $20 a $45 por un contrato de un año o $40 a $75 por dos años.

Después de más discusiones y audiencias públicas el 15 y 17 de junio, la RGB votará el 23 de junio para establecer las pautas de los aumentos que estarán en vigencia entre el 1º de octubre de 2009 y el 30 de septiembre de 2010.

La ley requiere que la junta apruebe una pauta propuesta, sobre la cual el público pueda comentar por al menos 30 días antes de la votación final. Sin embargo, durante los últimos años, bajo el liderazgo del presidente actual Marvin Markus, la junta ha disfrazado sus intenciones al proponer una gama de posibles aumentos.

"Este no es un aumento propuesto sobre el cual podamos comentar sino una nube de probabilidad", objetó un inquilino en la votación, celebrada en el Salón de Cooper Union, "y la probabilidad es que están proyectando otra ronda de aumentos fuera del alcance de nuestros bolsillos a pesar de una crisis de accesibilidad financiera en medio de ganancias récords por parte de los caseros".

Antes de la votación preliminar, los dos representantes de los inquilinos, Adriene Holder y Ronald Languedoc, se negaron a hacer una propuesta. Se opusieron al proceso utilizado por la junta el año pasado y también hasta ahora este año, donde excepto por Markus, los miembros públicos no revelan sus pensamientos en discusiones con otros miembros. También criticaron la ausencia de discusión sobre los aumentos mínimos impuestos el año pasado, que fueron propuestos en un correo electrónico enviado a los miembros de la junta el día de la votación final.

La junta de nueve miembros consiste en dos representantes de los caseros, dos representantes de los inquilinos y cinco "miembros públicos". Todos los miembros públicos, escogidos por el alcalde Michael Bloomberg, tienen antecedentes financieros y en negocios. A juzgar por sus acciones el 5 de mayo, todavía no entienden las dificultades que enfrentan los inquilinos de Nueva York durante la peor baja económica desde la Gran Depresión de los años 1930.

El año pasado, la junta aprobó los aumentos más altos en décadas: 4.5 por ciento por un año y 8.5 por ciento por dos años, con un mínimo de $45 o $85 para inquilinos que paguen menos de $1,000 al mes y hayan estado en sus apartamentos por al menos seis años. Los inquilinos llamaron a esto una nueva variante del "impuesto de pobres" desacreditado de los gobiernos de Koch y Giuliani, y lo están impugnando en una demanda pendiente llevada a la corte por la Sociedad de Ayuda Legal (Legal Aid Society) y los Servicios Legales (Legal Services).

Un estudio hecho por el controlador del estado Thomas DiNapoli en abril mostró que la Ciudad de Nueva York perdió 178,542 apartamentos que se alquilan por menos de $1,000 entre 2002 y 2008. Basado en el nivel de privación federal de un 30 por ciento de ingresos gastado en el alquiler, estos son los únicos apartamentos al alcance de los bolsillos de las familias con ingresos anuales

pasa a la página 4

Los Ajustes de la "Junta de Regulación de Renta" de la Ciudad de Nueva York (Orden No. 40)

Para los contratos de apartamentos de Renta Estabilizada que comienzan el 1ro. de octubre de 2007 hasta el 30 de septiembre de 2008.

Tipo de Contrato		Renta Legal Actual	Contrato de 1 Año	Contrato de 2 Años
Renovación del Contrato	Todos	casero abastece la calefacción	4.5%	8.5%
		inquilino paga la calefacción	4%	8%
	Salvo donde el último contrato del apartamento vacío se firmó 6 o más años atrás y la renta es menos de $1,000	casero abastece la calefacción	45	85
		inquilino paga la calefacción	40	80
Contratos para Apartamentos Vacíos	Más de $500	Incrementos por desocupación cobrados en los últimos 8 años	16%	20%
		Incrementos por desocupación no cobrados en los últimos 8 años	0.6% por el número de años desde el último incremento por estar vacío, más un 17.25%	0.6% por el número de años desde el último incremento por estar
	Menos de $300	Incrementos por desocupación cobrados en los últimos 8 años	16% + $100	20% + $100
		Incrementos por desocupación no cobrados en los últimos 8 años	0.6% por el número de años desde el último incremento por estar vacío, +16% + $100	0.6% por el número de años desde el último incremento
	Renta de $300 a $500	Incrementos por desocupación cobrados en los últimos 8 años	16% o $100, lo que sea mayor	20% o $100, lo que sea mayor
		Incrementos por desocupación no cobrados en los últimos 8 años	0.6% por el número de años desde el último incremento por estar vacío, mas 16%, o $100, lo que sea mayor	0.6% por el número de años desde el último incremento por estar vacío, mas 20%,

Renovación de Contrato
Los caseros tienen que ofrecer a los inquilinos de renta estabilizada una renovación de contrato dentro de 90 a 120 días antes de que venza su contrato actual. La renovación de contrato tiene que mantener los mismos términos y condiciones que el contrato que vencerá, excepto cuando refleje un cambio en la ley. Una vez que se haya recibido el ofrecimiento de renovación, los inquilinos tienen 60 días para aceptarlo y escoger si van a renovar el contrato por uno o dos años. El propietario tiene que devolver la copia firmada y fechada al inquilino dentro de 30 días.
La nueva renta no entrará en vigencia hasta que empiece el nuevo contrato, o cuando el propietario devuelva la copia firmada (lo que suceda después).
Ofrecimientos retrasados: si el casero ofrece la renovación tarde (menos de 90 días antes de que venza el contrato actual), el contrato puede empezar, a la opción del inquilino, o en la fecha que hubiera empezado si se hubiera hecho un ofrecimiento a tiempo, o en el primer pago de renta fechada 90 días después de la fecha del ofrecimiento del contrato. Las pautas de renta usadas para la renovación no pueden ser mayores que los incrementos de la RGB vigentes en la fecha en que el contrato debía empezar (si se lo hubiera ofrecido a tiempo). El inquilino no tiene que pagar el nuevo aumento de renta hasta 90 días después de que se haya hecho el ofrecimiento.

Asignación de Subarriendo
Los caseros podrán cobrar un aumento de 10 por ciento durante el término de subarriendo que comience durante este período de las pautas.
Programa de Exención de Incrementos de Renta para las Personas de Mayor Edad Las personas de mayor edad con renta estabilizada (y los que viven en apartamentos de renta controlada, Mitchell-Lama y cooperativas de dividendos limitados), con 62 años o más, y cuyos ingresos familiares disponibles al año sean de $27,000 o menos (para 2006) y que paguen (o enfrenten un aumento de renta que les haría pagar) un tercio o más de tal ingreso en renta pueden ser elegibles para una congelación de renta. Solicite a: NYC Dept of the Aging, SCRIE Unit, 2 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10007 o llame al 311 o visite su sitio Web, nyc.gov/html/dfta/html/scrie_sp/scrie_sp.shtml.

Programa de Exención de Incrementos de Renta para Minusválidos
Inquilinos con renta regulada que reciben ayuda económica elegible relacionada con discapacidad, que tengan ingresos de $17,580 o menos para individuales y $25,212 o menos para una pareja y enfrenten rentas iguales o más de un tercio de sus ingresos pueden ser elegibles para un congelamiento de renta. Solicite a: NYC Dept. of Finance, DRIE Exemptions, 59 Maiden Lane - 20th floor, New York, NY 10038. Llame al 311 para una solicitud o vaya al sitio Web en www.nyc.gov/html/dof/html/property/property_tax_reduc_drie.shtml

Las unidades desvanes
Los aumentos legalizados para unidades de desván son un 2.5 por ciento por un contrato de un año y 5.25 por ciento por dos años. No se permiten incrementos para las unidades de desván vacías.

Hoteles y SROs
4.5% para todas categorías, sin embargo, 0% cuando menos de un 85% de las unidades sean ocupadas por inquilinos permanentes de renta regulada.

Exceso de cobro
Los inquilinos deben estar al tanto de que muchos caseros se aprovecharán de las complejidades de estas pautas y concesiones adicionales, además del poco conocimiento de los inquilinos del historial de renta de sus apartamentos, para cobrar una renta ilegal. Los inquilinos pueden impugnar los aumentos de renta sin autorización en las cortes o al presentar una impugnación con la agencia estatal de vivienda, la División de Vivienda y Renovación Comunitaria (Division of Housing and Community Renewal, DHCR). El primer paso en el proceso es ponerse en contacto con la DHCR para ver el registro oficial del historial de renta. Vaya a www.dhcr.state.ny.us o llame al 718-739-6400 y pida un historial de renta detallado. Luego, hable con un abogado o defensor experto antes de seguir.

Para las pautas previas, llame a la RGB al 212-385-2934 o vaya al www.housingnyc.com

El descontrol de viviendas disponibles afecta los apartamentos que se alquilan por menos de $2,000

Por Mario Mazzoni
Traducido por Lightning Translations

Es harto sabido que los caseros pueden desregular apartamentos de renta regulada al llevar el alquiler legal hasta $2,000. Sin embargo, es menos sabido que los caseros no tienen que encontrar a alguien verdaderamente dispuesto a alquilar el apartamento por $2,000 para hacer que la unidad sea desregulada.

La suma de $2,000 es un umbral solamente relacionado a las representaciones archivadas en la División de Vivienda y Renovación Comunitaria (Division of Housing and Community Renewal, DHCR), y se pueden alquilar las unidades desreguladas a cualquier precio. En los vecindarios donde algunos caseros actualmente no pueden encontrar inquilinos dispuestos a pagar $2,000, se están aprovechando del descontrol de viviendas disponibles para remover apartamentos de la estabilización de alquileres, por vías legales e ilegales. Esto es especialmente común en los vecindarios de bajos ingresos que están pasando por la burguesificación. Esto deja a los futuros inquilinos vulnerables a aumentos altos en el futuro y sin protecciones contra el desalojo.

Algunos senadores estatales que representan a distritos con una cantidad sustancial de unidades de alquiler regulado sostienen que el descontrol de viviendas disponibles no tiene nada que ver con sus electores, porque la mayoría de los apartamentos en sus vecindarios todavía no se alquilan por $2,000. En los cada vez menos casos en los cuales esto es verdad, los caseros todavía están usando el descontrol de viviendas disponibles para mover apartamentos fuera de la regulación de rentas, para poder aprovecharse de un mercado en alza en el futuro. También, en los años venideros, apartamentos que se alquilan por $2,000 probablemente serán numerosos en todas las áreas de la ciudad.

Todos los senadores estatales Martin Golden (republicano de Brooklyn), Carl Kruger (republicano de Brooklyn), Diane Savino (demócrata de Brooklyn y Staten Island) y Jeffrey Klein (demócrata del Bronx y Westchester) han promovido malentendidos de lo que el umbral de $2,000 representa, como pretexto para no haber patrocinado el proyecto de ley para revocar el descontrol de viviendas disponibles. Se necesita llamarles la atención por su falsificación del asunto, además de su provincialismo descabellado. La regulación de rentas sigue siendo el más grande y más importante programa de vivienda asequible en la Ciudad de Nueva York, y el desmantelamiento de este sistema por medio del descontrol de viviendas disponibles está afectando a inquilinos en todas comunidades.

WEST SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD ALLIANCE

Líderes de inquilinos en el distrito de Pedro Espada condenaron la relación estrecha entre el senador y los caseros.

Una vez más

viene de la página 3

de menos de $40,000, una cifra que incluye más de la mitad del millón de familias que viven en apartamentos de alquiler estabilizado.

Horas antes de la votación del 5 de mayo, el concejal municipal John Liu (demócrata de Queens), el postulante para el puesto de controlador municipal apoyado por el Partido de Familias Trabajadoras (Working Families Party) en los comicios municipales del próximo otoño, instó a la junta a considerar una congelación de alquileres. "Según el propio estudio de la RGB este año", señaló Liu, "el alquiler medio para familias con alquiler estabilizado es un 31.6 por ciento de sus ingresos. Esto significa que los alquileres ya están inasequibles, porque familias están gastando más de un 30 por ciento de sus ingresos en el alquiler. . . . Mientras aún tomando en cuenta costos más altos para algunas cosas, los caseros hacen ganancias de 38 centavos de cada dólar que cobran, un aumento de 9.3 por ciento".

Estas cifras han sido extraídas de los informes de 2009 del personal de la RGB en torno a los ingresos de los inquilinos y la accesibilidad financiera, además de los ingresos de los caseros y sus gastos; los dos están disponibles en el sitio Web de la RGB (www.housingnyc.com/html/research/cresearch.html).

Un enorme peso

El 1 de mayo, la RGB oyó los testimonios de los peritos invitados de parte de los inquilinos y los caseros. Jim Parrot del Instituto de Política Monetaria (Fiscal Policy Institute) testificó que el desempleo en la ciudad ya ha alcanzado un 8.2 por ciento, con la oficina del alcalde proyectando que la ciudad perderá otros 100,000 trabajos en el próximo año. Subrayó que los salarios reales promedio han bajado un 3.5 por ciento desde 2001, el ingreso medio familiar ha bajado por un 4.2 por ciento y "los costos de la vivienda son ahora un enorme peso para las familias trabajadoras de Nueva York".

Vic Bach y Tom Waters de la Sociedad de Servicio Comunitario (Community Service Society) analizaron datos de la reciente Encuesta de Vivienda y Viviendas Disponibles (Housing and Vacancy Survey) que muestran que el peso medio de alquiler se elevó hasta 48 por ciento de los ingresos de las 1.1 millón de familias de bajos ingresos en la ciudad, con los alquileres elevándose por mucho mientras los ingresos bajaron. "Recomendaríamos que la RGB considere seriamente la congelación de alquileres en sus niveles actuales", concluyeron.

La Vocera del Concejo Municipal Christine Quinn hizo eco a esto sentimiento en un artículo de opinión en el *Daily News* el 7 de mayo, en el cual insta a la RGB a abandonar "su política del negocio de siempre de elevar los alquileres" y "poner fin a su práctica de muchos años de complacer a los caseros", quienes están prosperando más que en cualquier período de la historia reciente mientras el resto de la ciudad sufre.

El grupo de presión de los caseros, la Asociación de Renta Estabilizada (Rent Stabilization Association), trató de pintar un cuadro distinto, de caseros luchando para poder vivir de sus ingresos. También argumentaron que aumentos pequeños o nulos este año serían una injusticia para los inquilinos que optaron por los aumentos de dos años en 2008. Al preguntársele qué piensa del creciente número de políticos que están llamando por una congelación de alquileres, el presidente de la RSA Joseph Strasburg los acusó de "complacencia".

Quizás estos funcionarios públicos, y hasta los miembros públicos de la RGB, prestarán atención a las últimas palabras de Abraham Lincoln cuando éste habló el 27 de febrero de 1860 en el mismo Salón de Cooper Union donde se reúne la RGB, en el contexto de otra gran batalla entre los derechos de propiedad y los derechos humanos: "Tampoco dejemos de hacer nuestro deber por calumnias ni temamos hacerlo por amenazas. . . . TENGAMOS FE QUE EL BIEN DA LA FUERZA Y EN ESTA FE ATREVAMOS HACER NUESTRO DEBER COMO LO ENTENDEMOS HASTA EL FINAL".

Inquilinos de mayor edad y minusválidos

Las personas mayores de 62 años o más, en vivienda de renta regulada, Mitchell-Lama y algunos otros programas, con ingresos disponibles anuales de familia de $28,000 o menos (el año pasado) y quienes pagan (o enfrentan un aumento de renta que les obligaría a pagar) un tercio o más de estos ingresos en renta pueden llenar los requisitos para una Exención de Incrementos de Renta para las Personas de Mayor Edad (Senior Citizen Rent Exemption, SCRIE). Solicítela a:

The NYC Dept. of the Aging, SCRIE Unit
2 Lafayette Street, NY, NY 10007

Los inquilinos minusválidos que reciben ayuda financiera relacionada con invalidez y tienen ingresos de $18,396 o menos para individuos y $26,460 o menos para una pareja y quienes enfrentan rentas iguales a o más de un tercio de sus ingresos pueden llenar los requisitos para la Exención de Incrementos de Renta para Minusválidos (Disability Rent Increase Exemption, DRIE). Solicítela a:

NYC Dept. of Finance, DRIE Exemptions
59 Maiden Lane – 20th Floor, New York, NY 10038

La información sobre DRIE y SCRIE está disponible en el sitio Web de la ciudad, www.nyc.gov, o llame a 311.

Bloomberg Charges Homeless Rent for Shelters

The Bloomberg administration is now charging homeless people with jobs rent to live in city shelters.

This month, it began enforcing a 1997 state law that requires shelter residents to contribute part of their income for rent. On May 1, more than 500 of the 9,000 families living in city shelters received notice that they would have to start paying. State officials told the *New York Times* that about 2,000 of those families will eventually be charged rent.

The rent can be up to half the family's income. They can be evicted if they fail to pay.

City officials say it's fair to expect people with incomes to pay for shelter. But homeless advocates respond that the policy will make it harder for shelter residents to find permanent housing.

"I'm trying to save money so I can get out of here," shelter resident Vanessa Dacosta told the *Times*." I don't want to be in the shelter forever." Dacosta, a single mother who makes about $200 a week as a pizzeria cashier, is being charged $336 a month.

WEST SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD ALLIANCE

Hundreds of tenants mount a surprise protest on May 7 at the Water Club, where State Sen. Pedro Espada Jr., who has blocked pro-tenant legislation, is the keynote speaker at a luncheon for a landlord lobby group.

L.A. Landlords Lose Battle on Rent Control

A California appeals court has upheld a Los Angeles municipal ordinance imposing rent controls on new buildings that replace rent-regulated structures.

A city landlord group had challenged the ordinance, saying it violated the Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act, a 1995 state law that generally exempts new buildings from rent controls. But rent-control supporters pointed to the Ellis Act, an older state law that gives local governments the right to regulate rents in new buildings constructed on the site of demolished rent-controlled apartments.

In a decision handed down in April, Justice Patti S. Kitching held that the two laws were not incompatible. The Costa-Hawkins Act, she wrote, specifically states that it does not "affect the authority of a public entity that may otherwise exist to regulate or monitor the basis for eviction." The Ellis Act, she added, was intended to let owners evict tenants if they are taking the building out of the rental market. Its rent-control provision, she said, was necessary to protect rent-controlled tenants from owners evicting them under false pretenses and then building market-rate housing on the property.

Philippines Moves to Revive Rent Controls

Both houses of the Philippine Congress have passed bills to revive the country's rent-control law, which expired last December after nine years.

On May 6, the House approved the Rent Control Act of 2009, which would freeze rents for one year and limit annual increases to 4 percent for the next three years. Afterwards, a government housing panel would regulate rents, restricting increases to not more than the annual inflation rate. The bill would apply to all residential units that rent for less than 10,000 pesos a month (about $213) in metropolitan Manila and other cities, and to units renting for less than 5,000 pesos in other areas.

The bill now must be reconciled with rent-control legislation approved by the Senate on April 29. The Senate bill would limit rent increases to 10 percent and stay in effect for three years.

"The global economic crisis has hit hard workers in the export sector who have been laid off or whose incomes have been reduced due to shorter working periods. We need to provide them with safety measures to reduce their cost of living and rent control is one vital measure to alleviate their situation," Vice President Noli "Kabayan" de Castro told *Manila Standard Today*.

Complaint Numbers

To reach the Department of Housing, Preservation and Development's Central Complaints hotline, call 311.

Also call 311 to reach the Department of Buildings and other city agencies.

CITY LIMITS

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www.citylimits.org

Senior and Disabled Tenants

Seniors, 62 or older, in rent-regulated, Mitchell-Lama and some other housing programs whose disposable annual household income is $28,000 or less (for the previous year) and who pay (or face a rent increase that would cause them to pay) one-third or more of that income in rent may be eligible for a Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE). Apply to:
The NYC Dept of the Aging
SCRIE Unit
2 Lafayette Street, NY, NY 10007.

Disabled tenants receiving eligible disability-related financial assistance with incomes of $18,396 or less for individuals and $26,460 or less for a couple facing rents equal to or more than one-third of their income may be eligible for the Disability Rent Increase Exemption (DRIE). Apply to:
NYC Dept. of Finance
DRIE Exemptions
59 Maiden Lane - 20th floor
New York, NY 10038

DRIE and SCRIE info is available on the city's website www.nyc.gov, or call 311.

Hotline Volunteers Needed!

Our phones are ringing off the hook! Met Council is looking for people to counsel tenants on our hotline. We will train you! The hotline runs on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 1:30-5 p.m. If you can give one afternoon a week for this crucial service to the tenant community, call (212) 979-6238.

HPD CODE VIOLATIONS ON LINE

Look up your building!

HPD violations are available on-line. Go to nyc.gov and select the Housing-HPD link from the agency drop down list.

GET ACTIVE!

Sign up for Met Council's e-mail alerts and get notices of rallies, hearings, and other important actions for tenants' rights and affordable housing.

www.metcouncil.net

Foreclosures Could Loom for Rent-Regulated Buildings

By Bennett Baumer

City housing officials laid out their plan to deal with foreclosures of multifamily buildings on April 27, at a hearing of the City Council's Community Development committee. Councilmembers grilled new Department of Housing Preservation Development Commissioner Rafael Cestero on the foreclosure crisis.

Cestero laid out a plan to tap federal bailout and stimulus money to save multifamily buildings from falling into foreclosure. He essentially echoed Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner's plan to mix public and private funding to finance problematic buildings and prevent them from foreclosure. That plan is designed for smaller buildings, for single to three-family homes. But many endangered buildings in New York City's are rent-regulated buildings – buildings with six or more units built before 1974.

"It's not just families in these buildings [that could face problems]. There are spillover effects as well," said Cestero. He warned that if multifamily buildings go into foreclosure, landlords might refuse to make repairs. As conditions in those buildings deteriorate, it could drive entire blocks into decline by lowering property values and discouraging other property owners from making repairs and capital improvements.

HPD will stress outreach to owners in danger of foreclosure, code enforcement targeting distressed buildings, and the linchpin – using federal funds to purchase or cofinance mortgages with private investors.

"We are looking at ways to use resources to purchase bank assets and transfer ownership to those who are interested in the long-term affordably of the building," Cestero said. In other words, putting restrictions on any private investors who accept public financing for purchasing buildings in foreclosure or at risk of it. Nonetheless, he admitted that HPD had not talked to the federal government about tenant protections.

Private equity firms are driving the looming foreclosure crisis in the city. These are little-regulated investment firms, not publicly traded, that pool private capital to purchase assets. In New York City, they have bought up thousands of rent-regulated apartments. Tenant groups call them "predatory equity" because of their business plans depend on gaining massive rent increases to become profitable, which is not possible without driving out rent-stabilized tenants.

"These robber barons in the guise of bankers are pillaging our neighborhoods," Councilmember James Sanders (D-Queens) said.

Private equity investors generally look for quick returns on their investments. During the boom, they overpaid for rent-regulated buildings, forcing them to seek high tenant turnover. When these firms, such as Vantage Properties—which bought 48 Queens buildings for $300 million last year—are unable to dislodge rent-regulated tenants fast enough, they are in danger of foreclosure.

While foreclosures continue to wreak havoc on one- to three-family homes in Queens, a novel idea came forth from housing advocates at the Council meeting; Let multifamily buildings go into foreclosure. Advocates contend if the rent-regulated buildings fall into foreclosure, they can use federal money to preserve affordable housing from deteriorating and prevent private equity firms from abusing tenants.

With real-estate prices falling, advocates fear that a new generation of private equity firms might take advantage of their predecessors' bad luck—by buying up distressed buildings cheaply and implementing the same business plan.

"The second wave of the foreclosure crisis is, sadly, just around the corner," said Council Speaker Christine Quinn.

NYC Rent Guidelines Board Adjustments
(Order No. 40)

for Rent Stabilized Leases commencing Oct. 1, 2008 through Sept. 30, 2009

Order No. 39, covering leases commencing prior to October 1, 2008, is available at http://www.metcouncil.net/campaigns/RGB.htm

Lease Type	Current Legal Rent		One-year Lease	Two-year Lease
Renewal Leases	All...	landlord supplies heat	4.5%	8.5%
		tenant pays for heat	4%	8%
	Except where last vacancy lease was 6 or more years ago and rent is below $1000	landlord supplies heat	$45	$85
		tenant pays for heat	$40	$80
Vacancy leases	More than $500	Vacancy allowance charged within last 8 years	16%	20%
		No vacancy allowance charged within last 8 years	0.6% times number of years since last vacancy allowance, plus 16%	0.6% times number of years since last vacancy allowance, plus 20%
	Less than $300	Vacancy allowance charged within last 8 years	16% plus $100	20% plus $100
		No vacancy allowance charged within last 8 years	0.6% times number of years since last vacancy allowance, plus 16% plus $100	0.6% times number of years since last vacancy allowance, plus 20% plus $100
	Rent $300 to $500	Vacancy allowance charged within last 8 years	16% *or* $100, whichever is greater	20% *or* $100, whichever is greater
		No vacancy allowance charged within last 8 years	0.6% times number of years since last vacancy allowance, plus 16%, *or* $100, whichever is greater	0.6% times number of years since last vacancy allowance, plus 20%, *or* $100, whichever is greater

Renewal Leases
Landlords must offer a rent-stabilized tenant a renewal lease 90 to 120 days before the expiration of the current lease. The renewal lease must keep the same terms and conditions as the expiring lease, except when reflecting a change in the law. Once the renewal offer is received, the tenant has 60 days to accept it and choose whether to renew the lease for one or two years. The owner must return the signed and dated copy to the tenant in 30 days. The new rent does not go into effect until the start of the new lease term, or when the owner returns the signed copy (whichever is later).

Late offers: If the owner offers the renewal late (fewer than 90 days before the expiration of the current lease), the lease term can begin, at the tenant's option, either on the date it would have begun had a timely offer been made, or on the first rent payment date 90 days after the date of the lease offer. The rent guidelines used for the renewal can be no greater than the RGB increases in effect on the date the lease should have begun (if timely offered). The tenant does not have to pay the new rent increase until 90 days after the offer was made.

Sublease Allowance
Landlords can charge a 10 percent increase during the term of a sublease that commences during this guideline period.

Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption Program Rent-stabilized seniors (and those living in rent-controlled, Mitchell-Lama, and limited equity coop apartments), 62 or older, whose disposable annual household income is $28,000 or less (for 2007 tax year) and who pay (or face a rent increase that would cause them to pay) one-third or more of that income in rent may be eligible for a rent freeze. *Apply to:* NYC Dept. for the Aging, SCRIE Unit, 2 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10007 or call 311 or visit their Web site, *www.nyc.gov/html/dfta/html/scrie/scrie.shtml.*

Disability Rent Increase Exemption Program
Rent-regulated tenants receiving eligible disability-related financial assistance who have incomes of $18,396 or less for individuals and $26,460 or less for a couple and are facing rents equal to more than one-third of their income may be eligible for a rent freeze. *Apply to:* NYC Dept. of Finance, DRIE Exemptions, 59 Maiden Lane, 20th floor, New York, NY 10038. Call 311 for an application or go to the Web site at *www.nyc.gov/html/dof/html/property/property_tax_reduc_drie.shtml.*

Loft Units
Legalized loft-unit increases are 2.5 percent for a one-year lease and 5.25 percent for two years. No vacancy allowance is permitted on vacant lofts.

Hotels and SROs
4.5% for all categories, however, 0% when fewer than 85% of units are occupied by permanent, rent-regulated tenants.

Rent Overcharges
Tenants should be aware that many landlords will exploit the complexities of these guidelines and bonuses—and the tenant's unfamiliarity with the apartment's rent history—to charge an illegal rent. Tenants can challenge unauthorized rent increases through the courts or by filing a challenge with the state housing agency, the Division of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR). The first step in the process is to contact the DHCR to see the official record of the rent history. Go to *www.dhcr.state.ny.us* or call (718) 739-6400 and ask for a detailed rent history. Then speak to a knowledgeable advocate or a lawyer before proceeding.

For previous guidelines, call the RGB at (212) 385-2934 or go to www.housingnyc.com.

Missed an issue of TENANT?

Check us out on the Web:

www.metcouncil.net

Rent Reform

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ongoing campaigns, with a special focus on Senator Pedro Espada (D-Bronx, although he lives in Westchester) who has publicly cozied up to the real-estate lobby and made it clear that he will try to thwart most efforts to preserve affordable housing and strengthen tenant rights.

Immediately after the Democrats won control over the Senate in November, Espada joined with Ruben Diaz Sr. (D-Bronx) and Carl Kruger (D-Brooklyn) in a so-called "gang of three" threatening as a group to defect to the Republican Party and give the GOP a Senate majority unless they were given influential committee posts. In this blackmail, Espada secured the chairmanship of the Senate Housing Committee. All three Senators are major roadblocks to reforming the rent laws, with Espada openly undermining tenant initiatives. The same three Senators also blocked all of the meaningful proposals that would have provided adequate financing to the MTA, forcing a compromise that does not address the transit system's chronic underfunding.

Espada is facing heat on a number of fronts. He is the only Senator yet to open a district office, seven months after being elected. He resides in the upscale Westchester suburb of Mamaroneck, although state law requires him to live in the Bronx community that he represents. Three employees of a company he runs pleaded guilty to diverting money from AIDS treatment programs to his campaign. And he owes the Board of Elections over $60,000 in fines from his 2001 bid for Bronx borough president. Overall, Espada and his campaign have accumulated 27 judgments for failing to disclose campaign-finance records. With those records not yet released, it's not clear how much money he has received from real-estate interests.

His affinity for landlords and contempt for tenants, however, is quite evident. Some of this can be seen in a videotaped interview Espada conducted in late March with Joseph Strasburg of the Rent Stabilization Association, a powerful landlord lobby group. The discussion addressed the recent court ruling, now being appealed, that apartments were illegally deregulated at Stuyvesant Town/Peter Cooper Village due to the owner receiving J-51 tax benefits, which could pave the way for similar lawsuits in other buildings, for millions in overcharge payments for tenants, and for the reregulation of thousands of units. Strasburg claimed that rent rollbacks could devastate the city's tax base and force landlord to abandon their buildings.

"Rest assured," Espada told him, "as part of my housing agenda, I am definitely calling for a time-out to really evaluate the full impact of this." The senator later referred to the package of pro-tenant legislation passed by the Assembly, currently being held up in his Housing Committee, as "so-called reform measures," and suggested that the bills would lead to disinvestment in real estate and consequent massive layoffs in the construction trades. Alluding to tenant efforts to repeal vacancy decontrol and reform the MCI system, Espada framed them not as efforts to protect housing affordability, but as job-killing measures for construction workers, asking Strasburg, "In terms of being an economic engine, how many jobs are at risk?"

In recent weeks, tenants have begun fighting back. At a housing summit at New York University on April 30 where Espada gave opening and closing remarks, housing groups canvassed the room with literature exposing his betrayal of tenants. Meanwhile, mobilizing had already begun for a protest on May 7, when Espada was the guest speaker at an annual luncheon for the Neighborhood Preservation Political Action Fund, a major landlord lobby group.

Over 100 tenants converged at midday in a surprise attack to disrupt the luncheon, being held at the Water Club, a fancy Manhattan riverfront restaurant. A few managed their way inside, only to be strong-armed out by security, but a boisterous crowd surrounded the entrance with chants of "housing is a human right" and "we're watching you, Espada." The large and energized group of tenants marched around the restaurant before holding a press conference condemning Senator Espada for holding up bills to protect tenants and preserve affordable housing. Future actions and targeted campaigns are in the works for all of the senators who are standing in the way of passing legislation to reform the rent laws.

Volunteer efforts abound, ranging from making phone calls to tenants in key Senate districts, to joining housing groups on daily trips to Albany to pressure Senators. No prior experience in this is required. For more info, please call Mario at Met Council: (212) 979-6238, ext. 200.

NO MORE DELAYS – STRONGER RENT LAWS NOW!

Between now and June 22, the New York State Legislature must enact a number of necessary reforms to undo years of legislative giveaways to the New York City real-estate lobby that have exacerbated the housing crisis in the city and suburban counties. While there are many important pro-tenant bills pending in both houses, the following ten represent the absolute minimum of necessary reform. This year. Not next year.

• Full repeal of vacancy decontrol. This bill would also reregulate 90 to 95 percent of the apartments that have been lost to vacancy decontrol in the last 15 years. (S2237-A, Stewart Cousins/A2005 Rosenthal) (Passed Assembly)

• Repeal the so-called Urstadt Law of 1971 and restore full home-rule powers over rents and evictions to the New York City Council and mayor. (S749 Krueger/A1688 V. Lopez)

• Adequate rent and eviction protections for former Mitchell-Lama and project-based Section 8 tenants. Would put all apartments in buildings that leave those programs into rent stabilization, and close the loophole for "unique or peculiar" rent increases. (S3326, Stewart-Cousins)

• Reform Major Capital Improvement Rent Increase System. Would make MCI rent increases temporary surcharges. (S745-A Krueger/A1928 O'Donnell) (Passed Assembly)

• Reform Individual Apartment Improvement Rent Increase System. Would lower renovation increases from 1/40th of the monthly rent to 1/84th, and allow direct agency oversight to discourage fraud. (S5296 Squadron/A5316)

• Reform Owner-Use Evictions Loophole. Would stop landlords from evicting entire buildings of rent-regulated tenants to create their personal McMansions. It would limit them to one apartment and require them to demonstrate "immediate and compelling necessity" for it. (S2642 Squadron/A1685 V. Lopez) (Passed Assembly)

• Reform Preferential Rent Loophole. If owners rent apartments at a "preferential rent" lower than the legal maximum, they could not increase the rent by more than the legal guideline when tenants renew their leases. (A465 Jeffries) (Passed Assembly)

• Reduce the Statutory Vacancy Bonus. Would reduce the extra increase allowed for vacant apartments from 20 percent to 10 percent. (A1686 V. Lopez) (Passed Assembly)

• An 18-month moratorium on Mitchell-Lama buyouts. (S2171 Duane/A6706 Bing)

• Restructure the New York City and suburban rent boards, including requiring City Council confirmation of mayoral appointees. (To be introduced by Duane and Latimer)

Vacancy Decontrol Affects Apartments Renting for Under $2,000

It is widely known that landlords can deregulate rent-regulated apartments by bringing the legal rent to $2,000 a month. Much less known, however, is that they don't have to find someone actually willing to rent the apartment for $2,000 to get the unit deregulated.

The $2,000 figure is a threshold relating only to filings at DHCR, and deregulated units can be put on the market for any price. In neighborhoods where some landlords cannot currently find tenants willing to pay $2,000, they are taking advantage of vacancy decontrol to remove apartments from rent stabilization, legally or illegally. This is particularly common in low-income neighborhoods experiencing gentrification. It leaves future tenants vulnerable to high rent increases in the future and without eviction protections.

Some Senators who represent districts with substantial numbers of rent-regulated units are claiming that vacancy decontrol doesn't affect their constituents, because most apartments in their neighborhoods don't yet rent for $2,000. In the ever-fewer cases where this is true, landlords are still using vacancy decontrol to move apartments out of rent regulation so that they can take advantage of a rising market in the future. Also, in the coming years, $2,000 apartments are likely to become common in all areas of the city.

State Senators Martin Golden (R-Brooklyn), Carl Kruger (R-Brooklyn), Diane Savino (D-Brooklyn and Staten Island), and Jeffrey Klein (D-Bronx and Westchester), have all promoted misunderstandings of what the $2,000 threshold represents as an excuse for why they haven't signed onto the bill to repeal vacancy decontrol. They need to be called out for misrepresenting the issue, as well as for their reckless provincialism. Rent regulation remains the largest and most important affordable-housing program in New York City, and the dismantling of this system through vacancy decontrol is affecting tenants in every community.

—Mario Mazzoni

RGB Proposes

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for city comptroller in this fall's municipal elections, urged the Board to consider a rent freeze. "According to the RGB's own study this year," Liu pointed out, "the median rent for rent-stabilized households is 31.6 percent of their income. This means that rents are already unaffordable, because families are paying more than 30 percent of their income in rent.... Meanwhile, even accounting for higher costs for some items, landlords are making a profit of 38 cents of every dollar they take in, an increase of 9.3 percent."

These figures are taken from the 2009 RGB staff reports on tenants' income and affordability and on owner income and expenses, both available on the RGB website (www.housingnyc.com/html/research/cresearch.html).

An enormous burden

On May 1, the RGB heard invited expert testimony on behalf of tenants and owners. Jim Parrot of the Fiscal Policy Institute testified that unemployment in the city has already reached 8.2 percent, with the mayor's office projecting that the city will lose another 100,000 jobs in the coming year. He noted that real median wages have fallen 3.5 percent since 2001 and median household income has fallen by 4.2 percent, and that "housing costs are now an enormous burden on New York's working families."

Vic Bach and Tom Waters of the Community Service Society analyzed data from the recent Housing and Vacancy Survey showing that the median rent burden rose to 48 percent of income for the 1.1 million low-income households in the city, with rents rising sharply even as income fell. "We would recommend that RGB seriously consider freezing stabilized rents at current levels," they concluded.

This sentiment was echoed by Council Speaker Christine Quinn in a *Daily News* op-ed piece on May 7, in which she urges the RGB to abandon "its business-as-usual policy of hiking rents" and "end its longstanding practice of catering to landlords" who are doing better than at any time in recent history while the rest of the city suffers.

The landlord's lobbying arm, the Rent Stabilization Association, tried to paint a different picture, of landlords struggling to make ends meet. They also argued that small or no increases this year would be unfair to tenants who opted for two-year increases in 2008. Asked what he thinks of the growing number of elected officials calling for a rent freeze, RSA president Joseph Strasburg accused them of "pandering."

Perhaps these public servants, and even the public members of the RGB, will heed the closing words of Abraham Lincoln when he spoke February 27, 1860, in the same Great Hall at Cooper Union where the RGB meets, in the context of a different great struggle between property rights and human rights: "Neither let us be slandered from our duty by false accusations against us, nor frightened from it by menaces.... LET US HAVE FAITH THAT RIGHT MAKES MIGHT, AND IN THAT FAITH, LET US, TO THE END, DARE TO DO OUR DUTY AS WE UNDERSTAND IT."

Rent Guidelines Board Schedule

Public Meeting
Thursday, June 4
Department of City Planning
Spector Hall, 22 Reade St.
New York, NY 10007
9:30 a.m.–noon

Public Hearing
(Public Testimony)
Monday, June 15
Main Theatre of Hostos
Community College/CUNY
450 Grand Concourse
Bronx, NY 10451
4:00–10:00 p.m.

Public Hearing
(Public Testimony)
Wednesday, June 17
The Great Hall at Cooper Union
7 East 7th St.,
corner of 3rd Ave. (Basement)
New York, NY 10003
10:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.

Public Meeting (Final Vote)
Tuesday, June 23
The Great Hall at Cooper Union
7 East 7th St.,
corner of 3rd Ave. (Basement)
New York, NY 10003
5:30–9:30 p.m.

WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

LOWER EAST SIDE BRANCH at
Cooper Square Committee
61 E. 4th St. (btwn. 2nd Ave. & Bowery)
Tuesdays ..... 6:30 pm

CHELSEA COALITION ON HOUSING
Covers 14th St. to 30th St., 5th Ave. to the Hudson River.
322 W. 17th St. (basement), CH3-0544
Thursdays ..... 7:30 pm

GOLES (Good Old Lower East Side)
171 Avenue B (between 10 and 11 St.)
by appointments only except for emergencies. 212-533-2541.

HOUSING COMMITTEE OF RENA
Covers 135th St. to 165th St. from Riverside Dr. to St. Nicholas Ave.,
537 W. 156th St.
Thursdays..... 8 pm

MIRABAL SISTERS
618 W. 142nd St., 212-234-3002
Saturdays..... 1 - 4 pm

PRATT AREA COMMUNITY COUNCIL
201 DeKalb Ave., Brooklyn,
718-522-2613 ext. 24
3rd Wednesday ..... 6 pm

VILLAGE INDEPENDENT DEMOCRATS
26 Perry St. (basement), 212-741-2994
Wednesdays ..... 6 pm

WEST SIDE TENANTS UNION
4 W. 76 St.; 212-595-1274
Tuesday & Wednesday ..... 6-7 pm

HOUSING CONSERVATION COORDINATORS
777 10 Ave.; 212-541-5996
Mondays.....7-9 pm

NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS
Covers Sunset Park and surrounding neighborhoods
443 39 St., Ste. 202, Brooklyn
By appointment only. 718-686-7946, ext. 10

QUEENS COMMUNITY HOUSE
Forest Hills Community Center,
10825 62nd Dr., Forest Hills
(718) 592-5757, ext. 280
Mondays and Wednesdays ... 9:30-11 am

QUEENS COMMUNITY HOUSE
Pomonok Community Center,
6709 Kissena Blvd., Flushing
(718) 591-6060
Fridays ..... 10 am-12 pm

Have a question about your rights?

Our phones are open to the public
Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays from 1:30 to 5 p.m.

We can briefly answer your questions, help you with organizing or refer you to other help.

212-979-0611

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL ON HOUSING

Met Council is a citywide tenant union.

Our phones are open to the public
Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays from 1:30 to 5 p.m.

We can briefly answer your questions, help you with organizing or refer you to other help.

212-979-0611

Join Met Council

Membership: Individual, $25 per year; Low-income, $15 per year; family (voluntary: 2 sharing an apartment), $30 per year. Supporting, $40 per year. Sustaining, min. of $100 per year (indicate amount of pledge). For affiliation of community or tenant organizations, large buildings, trade unions, etc. call 212-979-6238.

My apartment ❑ controlled ❑ stabilized ❑ unregulated ❑ other_____

❑ I am interested in volunteering my time to Met Council. Please call me to schedule times and duties. I can ❑ counsel tenants, ❑ do office work, ❑ lobby public officials, ❑ attend rallies/protests.

Name

Address *Apt. No.*

City *State* *Zip*

Home Phone Number *Email*

Send your check or money order with this form to:
Metropolitan Council on Housing, 339 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10012